

TECHNICAL GUIDANCE NOTE: Sand and Gravel Shoreline - Manual Recovery

OBJECTIVE

Recovery of plastic nurdles using manual techniques. This approach is labour intensive, however the increased selectivity results in less organic debris being collected. Manual methods of recovery can involve shovels, brushes and nets, as well as sieves and trommels for later sorting.

SCOPE

For use on all sandy and gravel beaches where nurdles have been observed.

DESCRIPTION OF TECHNIQUE

1. Identify the strandline along the back of the beach; this is often indicated by a line of organic and inorganic debris.
2. Individuals should walk the strand line collecting nurdles by either picking or scooping debris into a container (e.g. a bucket) for later sorting.
3. The collected organic/inorganic debris mix should be stored appropriately (i.e. in buckets or bags) before being sorted either on or off-site.
4. Separation of nurdles from sediment and/or large organic debris can be achieved using trommels or large sieves with an appropriate mesh size.
5. Following sorting, recovered plastic should be stored appropriately in sealed bags or containers for later transportation. Other uncontaminated organic debris should be returned to the shoreline.

GENERAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

- Shovels, scoops, brushes and buckets
- Sieves and trommels;
- Strong bags for storage;

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

When collecting nurdles for long periods in the direct sunlight, appropriate sun-protection should be considered (e.g. sunhats, sun cream and suitable clothing). Due attention should also be made to any sensitive species and other wildlife in the area.

